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TO ASSIST THE INQUIRING, ANIMATE THE STRUGGLING, AND SYMPATHIZE WITH ALL.

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THE PIANO-FORTE.

HENRY THE FOURTH expressed a patriotic hope to see the time arrive when every man in France should have "a fowl boiling in his pot." The anathemas of an able political writer against music-playing in farmers' houses (very just if his calculation of the effect of it were the only one) do not hinder us from expressing a hope, that the time may arrive, when every family that can earn its subsistence, shall have its Piano-forte. Not to make them "fine and fashionable," or contemptuous of any right thinking; but to help them to the pleasures of true refinement, to reward them for right thinking and right doing, and make them feel how compatible are the homeliest of their duties with an elegant recreation. Just as the fields and homesteads around them are powdered with daisies and roses, and the very cabbages in their gardens can glitter with sunny dew-drops, to those that have eyes beyond their common use.

In Germany they have Piano-fortes in inns and cottages; why should they not have them in England? The only true answer is, because we sea-faring and commercial Saxons, by very reason of our wealth, and of the unequal advance of knowledge in comparison with it, have missed the wiser conclusions, in this respect, of our continental brethren, and been accustomed to the vulgar mistake of identifying all refinement with riches, and, consequently, all the right of being refined with the attainment of them. We fancy that nobody can or will be industrious and condescend to a homely duty, who has a taste for an elegance; and, so fancying, we bring up the nation, at their peril, to have the same opinion, and thus the error is maintained, and all classes suffer for it; the rich, because it renders them but half sensible of the real enjoyment of their accomplishments, and makes them objects of jealousy to the poor; and the poor, because it forces them to work out, with double pain, that progression towards a better state of things, the steps of which would be healed and elevated by such balmy accompaniments. In England, it is taken for an affectation, or some worse sign, if people show an inclination to accomplishments not usually found within their sphere. But the whole evil consists in the accomplishments not being there already, and constituting part of their habits; for in Germany the circumstance is regarded with no such ill-will; nor do the male or female performers who can play on the Piano-forte, or sing to it (and there are millions of such) fancy they have the less duties to perform, or that they are intitled a bit the more to disrespect those duties. On the contrary, they just know so much the better what is good both in the duty and the recreation; for no true thing can co-exist falsely with another that is true; each reflects light and comfort on each. To have one set of feelings harmonized and put in good key, is to enable us to turn others to their best account; and he or she who could go from their music to their duties in a frame of mind the worse for it, would only be the victim of a false opinion, eradicable, and not of a natural feeling improveable. But false refinements are first set up, and then made judges of true ones. A foolish rich man, who can have concerts in his house, identifies his music, not with anything that he really feels or knows about it, but with his power to afford it. He is of opinion with

Hugh Rebeck in the play, when he is asked why music is said to have a "silver sound,"—"Because musicians sound for silver." But if he knew what music really was, he would not care twopence for the show and flare of the thing, any more than he would to have a nightingale painted like a parrot. You may have an *Aolian* harp in your window that shall cost twenty guineas—you may have another that shall cost little more than as many pence. Will the winds visit the poor one with less love? or the true ear hear it with the less rapture? One of the obstacles in the way of a general love of music, in this country, is the dearness of it, both print and instrument; and this is another effect of the mistakes of wealth. The rich, having monopolized music, have made it costly; and the mistaken spirit of trade encourages the delusion, instead of throwing open the source of comfort to greater numbers. A costly Piano-forte makes a very fine, and, it must be owned, a very pleasing show in a room, if made in good taste; but scarcely a bit of the fineness is necessary to it. A Piano-forte is a harp in a box; and the box might be made of any decent materials, and the harp strung for a comparative nothing to what it is now. If we took a lesson from our cousins in Saxony and Bavaria, the demand for cheap Piano-fortes would soon bring down the price; and instead of quarrelling over their troubles, or muddling them with beer and opium, and rendering themselves alike unfit for patience or action, the poor would "get up" some music in their villages, and pursue their duties, or their claims, with a calmness beneficial to everybody.

We are aware of the political question that might be put to us at these points of our speculation; but we hold it to be answered by the real nature of the ease, and, in fact, to have nothing whatever to do with it. We are an unmusical people at present (unless the climate have to do with it), simply because of what has been stated, and not for any reason connected with questions of greater or less freedom. The most musical nations—Greece, Italy, and Germany—have alike been free or enslaved, according as other circumstances happened; not as music was more or less regarded; with this difference, that the more diffused the music, the more happy the peace, or the more "deliberate" the "valour."^{*} The greatest among the most active as well as most contemplative of mankind have been lovers of music, often performers of it, and have generally united, in consequence, both action and contemplation. Epaminondas was a flute-player; so was Frederick the Second; and Luther and Milton were organists.

In connexion with music, then, let us hear nothing about polities, either way. It is one of God's goods which we ought to be desirous to see cultivated among us, next after corn, and honesty, and books. The human hand was made to play it, the ear to hear it, the soul to think it something heavenly; and if we do not avail ourselves of it accordingly, we turn

not our hands, ears, and souls to their just account, nor reap half the benefit we might from the very air that sounds it.

A Piano-forte is a most agreeable object. It is a piece of furniture with a soul in it, ready to waken at a touch, and charm us with invisible beauty. Open or shut, it is pleasant to look at; but open, it looks best, smiling at us with its ivory, like the mouth of a sweet singer. The keys of a Piano-forte are, of themselves, an agreeable spectacle—an elegance not sufficiently prized for their aspect, because they are so common; but well worth regarding even in that respect. The colour of the white keys is not a cold white, or even when at their whitest there is something of a warmth in the idea of ivory. The black furnish sort of Mosaic, and all are smooth and easy to the touch. It is one of the advantages of this instrument to the learner, that there is no discord to go through in getting at a tone. The tone is ready made. The finger touches the key, and there is music at once. Another and greater advantage is, that it contains a whole concert in itself, for you may play with all your fingers, and then every finger performs the part of a separate instrument. True, it will not compare with real concert—with the rising winds of an orchestra; but in no single instrument, except the organ, can you have such a combination of sounds; and the organ itself cannot do for you what the Piano-forte does. You can neither get it so cheap, nor will it condescend to play everything for you as the other does. It is a lion which has "no skill in dandling the kid." It is Jupiter, unable to put off his deity when he visits you. The Piano-forte is not incapable of the grandest music, and it performs the light and neat to admiration, and does not omit even the tender. You may accompany with it, almost equally well, the social graces of Mozart, and the pathos of Winter and Paesiello; and, as to a certain miniature brilliance of taste and execution, it has given rise to a music of its own, in the hands of Clementi and others. All those delicate ivory keys which repose in such evenness and quiet, wait only the touch of the master's fingers to become a dancing and singing multitude, and, out of apparent confusion, make accordant loveliness. How pleasant to the uninitiated to see him lay his hand upon them, as if in mere indifference, or at random; and as he dimples the instrument with touches wide and numerous as rain-drops on a summer-sea, play upon the ear the most regular harmonies, and give us, in a twinkling, elaborations, which it would take us years to pick out. We forget that he has gone through the same labour, and think only of the beautiful and mysterious result. He must have a taste, to be sure, which no labour can gift him with, and of this we have a due sense. We wish we had a book by us, written a few years back, intitled 'A Ramble among the Musicians in Germany,' in order that we might quote a passage from it about the extempore playing of Hummel, the celebrated master who was lately in this county; but, if we are not mistaken, it is the hand of the same writer which, in so good a style, between sport and scholarship, plays its musical criticisms every week in the 'Atlas'; for they are the next thing to an instrument themselves; and we recommend our readers to get a sight of that paper as often as they can, in order to cultivate the taste

* " Anon they move
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders: such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmot'd,
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat:
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'swage'
With solemn touches troubled thought, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds."—*Paradise Lost*.

of which England at present seems to be so promisingly ambitious. By the way, we know not whether the Italians use the word in the same sense at present; but in an old dictionary in our possession, the keys of musical instruments are called "tasti,"—*tastes*,—a very expressive designation. You do *taste* the Piano-forte the moment you *touch* it. Anybody can *taste* it; which, as we said before, is not the case with other instruments, the tone in them not being ready made; though a master, of course, may apply the word to any.

"So said,—his hand, sprightly as fire, he flings,
And with a quavering coyness *tastes* the strings."

There are superfine ears that profess not to be able to endure a Piano-forte after a concert; others that always find it to be out of tune; and more who veil their insensibility to music in general, by protesting against "everlasting tinkles," and school-girl affectation or sullenness. It is not a pleasure, certainly, which a man would select, to be obliged to witness affectations of any sort, much less sullenness, or any other absurdity. Such young ladies as are perpetually thinking of their abstract pretensions, and either affectedly trying to screw up their musical skill to them, or resenting, with tears and petty exclamations, that they cannot do it, are not the most sensible and agreeable of all possible charmers. But these terrible calamities may be safely left to the endurance, or non-endurance, of the no less terrible critics, who are so merciless upon them, or pretend to be. The critics and the performers will equally take themselves for prodigious people; and music will do both parties more good than harm in the long run, however their zeal may fall short of their would-be capacity for it. With respect to Piano-fortes not perfectly in tune, it is a curious fact, in the history of sounds, that no instrument is ever perfectly in tune. Even the heavenly charmer, music, being partly of earth as well as of heaven, partakes the common imperfection of things sublunar. It is, therefore, possible to have senses too fine for it, if we are to be always sensible of this imperfection; to

"Die of an air in achromatic pain;"

and if we are not to be thus sensible, who is to judge at what nice point of imperfection the disgust is to begin, where no disgust is felt by the general ear? The sound of a trumpet, in Mozart's infancy, is said to have threatened him with convulsions. To such a man, and especially to so great a master, every right of a horror of discord would be conceded, supposing his ear to have grown up as it began; but that it did not do so is manifest from his use of trumpets; while at the same time so fine *beyond* ultra-fineness was his ear, that there is a passage in his works, pronounced impractically discordant by the whole musical world, which nevertheless the critics are agreed that he must have written as it stands.* In other words, Mozart perceived a harmony in discord itself, or what universally appeared to be such,—just as very fine tastes in eating and drinking relish something which is disliked by the common palate; or, as the reading world discovered, not long ago, that Pope, for all his sweetness, was not so musical a versifier as those "crabbed old English poets." The crabs were found to be very apples of the Hesperides. What we would infer from this is, that the same exquisite perception which discerned the sweetness in the sour of that discord, would not have been among the first to despise an imperfection in the tuning of an instrument, nor, though he might wish it away, be rendered insensible by it of that finest part of the good music it performed, which consists in invention, and expression, and grace,—always the flower of music, as of every other art, and to be seen and enjoyed by the very finest ears as well as the humbler ones of good-will, because the soul of a thing is worth more to them than the body of it, and the greater is greater than the less.

Thus much to caution true lovers of music how

* We cannot refer to it in its place; but it was quoted some time since in the 'Atlas.'

they suffer their natural discernment to be warped by niceties "more nice than wise," and to encourage them, if an instrument pleases the general lovers of music, to try and be pleased with it as much as they can themselves, maugre what technical refiners may say of it, probably out of a jealousy of those whose refinements are of a higher order. All instruments are out of tune, the acoustic philosopher tells us. Well, be it so; provided we are not so much out of tune ourselves as to know it, or to be unable to discern something better in spite of it.

As to those who, notwithstanding their pretended love of music at other times, are so ready to talk of "jingling" and "tinkling," whenever they hear a Piano-forte, or a poor girl at her lesson, they have really no love of music whatsoever, and only proclaim as much to those who understand them. They are among the wiseacres who are always proving their spleen at the expence of their wit.

Piano-fortes will probably be much improved by the next generation. Experiments are daily making with them, sometimes of much promise; and the extension of science on all hands bids fair to improve whatever is connected with mechanism. We are very well content, however, for ourselves, with the instrument as it is; are grateful for it, as a concert in miniature; and admire it as a piece of furniture in all its shapes: only we do not like to see it made a table of, and laden with moveables; nor when it's upright does it seem quite finished without a bust on it; perhaps, because it makes so good a pedestal, and seems to call for one.

Piano-forte (soft and strong) is not a good name for an instrument which is no softer nor stronger than some others. The organ unites the two qualities most; but *organ* (*οργανόν*, instrumentum, —is if the instrument, by excellence) is the proper word for it, not to be parted with, and of a sound fit for its nobleness. The word *Piano-forte* came up, when the harpsichord and spinet, its predecessors, were made softer. *Harpsichord* (arpichorda,—commonly called in Italian clavicembalo, or keyed cymbal, i. e. a box or hollow, Fr. clavecin) is a sounding, but hardly a good word, meaning a harp with chords—which may be said of any harp. *Spinet*, an older term (spinette, thorns), signifies the quills which used to occupy the place of the modern clothed hammer, and which produced the harsh sound in the old instruments; the quill striking the edge of the strings, like the nicking of a guitar-string by the nail. The spinett was preceded by the *Virginals*, the oldest instrument, we believe, of the kind,—so called, perhaps, from its being chiefly played upon by young women, or because it was used in singing hymns to the Virgin. Spenser has mentioned it in an English *Trimeter-Jambic*; one of those fantastic attempts to introduce the uncongenialities of Latin versification, which the taste of the great poet soon led him to abandon. The line, however, in which the virginals are mentioned, presents a picture not unworthy of him. His apostrophe, at the outset, to his "unhappy verse," contains an involuntary satire:

"Unhappy Verse! the witness of my unhappy state,
Make thyself flutt'ring wings of thy fast flying
Thought, and fly forth unto my Love wheresoever
she be;

Whether lying restless in heavy bedde, or else
Sitting so cheerelesse at the cheerfull boarde, or else
Playing alone careleesse on her heavenlie virginals."

Queen Elizabeth is on record as having played on the virginals. It has been supposed by some that the instrument took its name from her; but it is probably older. The musical instrument mentioned in one of Shakespeare's sonnets is of the same keyed family. What a complete feeling of the *andante*, or going movement (as the Italians call it), is there in the beautiful line which we have marked! and what

a pleasant mixture of tenderness and archness throughout!

"How oft when thou, my music, music play'st
Upon that blessed wood, whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks, that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips, that should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss."

Thus we have two out of our great poets, Spenser and Shakespeare, showing us the delight they took in the same species of instrument which we have now, and so bringing themselves near to our Piano-fortes. [

" Still virginalling
Upon his palm—"

says the jealous husband in the 'Winter's Tale.' Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton, all mention the organ. Chaucer speaks of several instruments, but we cannot trace to him any keyed ones. It is rather surprising that the poets, considering the love of music natural to them, and their frequent mention of the art, have spoken of so few musical instruments—at least as if conversant with them in their houses. Milton was an organ-player, and Gay a flute-player (how like the difference of their genius!). Thomson possessed an *Æolian harp*, of which he seems to have been very fond. He has addressed an ode to it (from which the verses have been set to music, beginning

" Methinks I hear the full celestial choir"); and has again mentioned the instrument in his 'Castle of Indolence,' a most fit place for it.

All the truest lovers of any one art admire the other arts. Farinelli had several harpsichords, to which he gave the names of painters, according to their respective qualities,—calling one his Raphael, another his Correggio, &c. And the exquisite little painting, by Annibali Carracci, in the British Gallery, of 'Silenus teaching Apollo to play the pan-pipe' (together with a companion picture hanging near it) is said to have formed one of the compartments of the harpsichord belonging to that great painter. This is the natural magnificence of genius, which thinks no ornaments too precious for the objects of its love. We should like to be rich enough to play at imitating these great men, and see how much we could do to aggrandize a Piano-forte. Let us see: It should be of the most precious, aromatic wood; the white keys, ivory (nothing can be better than that); the black, ebony; the legs, sculptured with foliage and Loves and Graces; the panels should all be Titians and Correggios; the most exquisite verses out of the Poets should be carved between them; an arabesque cabinet should stand near it, containing the finest compositions; and Rossini should come from Italy to play them, and Pasta to sing.

Meantime, what signifies all this luxury? The soul of music is at hand, wherever there are keys and strings and loving fingers to touch them; and this soul, which disposes us to fancy the luxury, enables us to do without it. We can enjoy it in vision, without the expense.

We take the liberty of closing this article with two copies of verses, which two eminent living musicians, Messrs. Barnett and Novello, have done us the honour to set to music. The verses have been printed before, but many of our readers will not have seen them. We did not think it possible for any words of our own to give us so much pleasure in the repetition, as when we heard her father's composition sung by the pure and most tuneful voice of Miss Clara Novello (Clara is she well named); and the reader may see what is thought of Mr. Barnett's powers, by musical judges, in a criticism upon it in a late number of the 'Atlas,' or another in

a new cheap periodical publication, called the 'Englishwoman,' heiress to the graces and good stock of her deceased parents, the 'Ladies' Gazette' and the 'Penny Novelist,' and uniting them both to better advantage:—

THOUGHTS ON HEARING SOME BEAUTIFUL MUSIC.
(*Set to music by Vincent Novello.*)

When lovely sounds about my ears
Like winds in Eden's tree-tops rise,
And make me, though my spirit hears,
For very luxury close my eyes,
Let none but friends be round about,
Who love the smoothing joy like me,
That so the charm be felt throughout,
And all be harmony.

And when we reach the close divine,
Then let the hand of her I love,
Come with its gentle palm on mine,
As soft as snow, or lighting dove;
And let, by stealth, that more than friend
Look sweetness in my opening eyes;
For only so such dreams should end,
Or wake in Paradise.

THE LOVER OF MUSIC TO HIS PIANO-FORTE.

(From Barnett's 'Lyrical Illustrations of the Modern Poets.')

Oh friend, whom glad or grave we seek,
Heav'n-holding shrine!
I ope thee, touch thee, hear thee speak,
And peace is mine.
No fairy casket, full of bliss,
Out-values thee;
Love only, waken'd with a kiss,
More sweet may be.

To thee, when our full hearts oe'rflow
In griefs or joys,
Unspeakable emotions owe
A fitting voice:
Mirth flies to thee, and Love's unrest,
And Memory dear,
And Sorrow, with his tighten'd breast,
Comes for a tear.

Oh, since no joy of human mould
Thus waits us still,
Thrice bless'd be thine, thou gentle fold
Of peace at will.
No change, no sullenness, no cheat,
In thee we find;
Thy saddest voice is ever sweet,—
Thine answer, kind.

SHAKSPERE AT THE BURIAL OF SPENSER.

THE funeral of the great author of the 'Faerie Queene,' in Westminster Abbey, was attended by his poetical brethren, who threw verses into the grave. In Mr Landor's new and delightful volume, the 'Examination of William Shakspere' (which ought to be in the hands of every lover of subtle wit and sentiment, that can afford to purchase it), the future still greater poet, then young and unknown, is supposed to be modestly present in the back-ground; and a conceited townsman of his gives the following exquisite account of his promising countryman. He is writing a letter to another Stratford man, who comments upon the narrative in a like vein of self-complacent patronage and dull knowingness.

"Now I speak of poets (writeth Master Jacob Eldridge) you will be in a maze at hearing that our townsman hath written a power of matter for the play-houses. Neither he nor the bookseller think it quite good enough to print; but I do assure you on the faith of a Christian, it is not bad; and there is rare fun in the last thing of his about Venus, where a Jew, one Shiloh, is choused out of his money and his revenge. However, the best critics and the greatest lords find fault, and very justly, in the words."

"Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed

with the same food, hurt with the same weapon, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is?"

Surely this is very unchristianlike. Nay, for supposition sake, suppose it to be true, was it his business to tell the people so? Was it his duty to ring the crier's bell and cry to them, *the sorry Jews are quite as much men as you are.* The impudentest things (excepting some bauderries) that ever came from the stage! The church, luckily, has let him alone for the present, and the Queen winks upon it. The best defence he can make for himself is that it came from the mouth of a Jew, who says many other things as abominable. Master Greene may overrate him; but Master Greene declares that, if William goes on improving and taking his advice, it will be desperate hard work in another seven years to find so many as half-a-dozen chaps equal to him within the liberties. Master Greene and myself took him with us to see the burial of Master Edmund Spenser, in Westminster Abbey, on the 19th of January last. *The halberdmen pushed us back as having no business there.* Master Green told them he belonged to the Queen's company of players. William Shakspere could have said the same, *but did not.* And I, fearing that Master Greene and he might be halberded back into the crowd, showed the badge of the Earl of Essex. Whereupon did the sergeant ground his halbert, and say unto me,—

"That badge commands admittance every where:—your folk likewise may come in."

Master Greene was red-hot angry, and told me he would bring him before the council.

William smiled, and Master Greene said,

"Why, would not you, if you were in my place?"
He replied,

"I am as half inclined to do worse—to bring him before the audience some spare hour."

At the close of the burial-service, all the poets of the age threw their pens into the grave, together with the pieces they had composed in praise or lamentation of the deceased. William Shakspere was the only poet who abstained from throwing either pen or poem,—at which no one marvelled, he being of low estate, and the others not having yet taken him by the hand. Yet many authors recognised him, not indeed as author, but as player; and one, civiler than the rest, came up unto him triumphantly, his eyes sparkling with glee and satisfaction, and said consolatorily,—

"In due time, my honest friend, you may be admitted to do as much for one of us."

"After such encouragement," replied our townsman, "I am bound in duty to give you the preference, should I indeed be worthy."

This was the only smart thing he uttered all the remainder of the day; during the whole of it he appeared to be half lost, I know not whether in melancholy or in meditation, and soon left us."

Here endeth all that my kinsman Jacob wrote about William Shakspere, saving and excepting his excuses for having written so much. The rest of his letter was on a matter of wider and mightier import, namely, on the price of Cotteswold cheese at Evesham fair. And yet, although ingenious men be not among the necessities of life, there is something in them that makes us curious in regard to their goings and doings. It were to be wished that some of them had attempted to be better accountants, and others do appear to have laid aside the copybook full early in the day.

A Wise Man's Revenge.—Lycurgus, when they had abandoned to his revenge him who had put out his eye, took him home, and the punishment he inflicted was sedulous instructions to virtue; after which, the offender being restored to his people, was by them, from a rash and injurious, found become a good, honest, and modest, citizen.—*Du Faiz.*

ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

LIII.—A TRAGEDY OF THE WAR IN SPAIN.

(From the Memoirs of the Duchess D'Abrantes.)

A REGIMENT was sent from Burgos against a Guerrilla party, under the Marquis of Villa Campo, and ordered to treat the Spaniards with the most rigorous severity, especially the inhabitants of Arguano, a little village near the famous forest of Covaleda, whose deep shades, intersected only by narrow footpaths, were the resort of banditti and Guerrillas. A principal feature of the whole Spanish war was the celerity with which all our movements were notified to the insurgent chiefs, and the difficulty we experienced in procuring a spy or a guide, while these, when found, proved almost uniformly treacherous. The battalion had to march through a frightful country, climbing rugged rocks, and crossing frozen torrents, always in dread of unforeseen and sudden dangers. They reached the village, but perceived no movement—heard no noise. Some soldiers advanced, but saw nothing—absolute solitude reigned. The officer in command, suspecting an ambush, ordered the utmost circumspection. The troops entered the street, and arrived at a small opening, where some sheaves of wheat and Indian corn, and a quantity of loaves were still smoking on the ground, but consumed to a cinder and swimming in floods of wine, which had streamed from leather skins that had evidently been purposely broached as the provisions had been burnt, to prevent their falling into the hands of the French.

No sooner had the soldiers satisfied themselves, that after all their toils and dangers no refreshment was to be obtained, than they roared with rage—but no vengeance was within reach! All the inhabitants had fled!—fled into that forest where they might defy pursuit.

Suddenly cries were heard issuing from one of the deserted cottages, amongst which the soldiers had dispersed themselves in hopes of discovering some food or booty; they proceeded from a young woman holding a child, a year old, in her arms, whom the soldiers were dragging before their lieutenant. "Stay, lieutenant," said one of them, "here is a woman we have found sitting beside an old one, who is past speaking: question her a little."

She was dressed in the peasant costume of the Soria and Rioja mountains; and was pale, but not trembling.

"Why are you alone here?" asked the lieutenant.

"I staid with my grandmother, who is paralytic, and could not follow the rest to the forest," replied she, haughtily, and as if vexed at being obliged to drop a word in presence of a Frenchman; "I staid to take care of her."

"Why have your neighbours left the village?" The Spaniard's eyes flashed fire; she fixed on the lieutenant a look of strange import, and answered: "You know very well; were they not all to be massacred?"

The lieutenant shrugged his shoulders: "But why did you burn the bread and wheat, and empty the wine skins?"

"That you might find nothing; as they could not carry them off, there was no alternative but burning them."

At this moment shouts of joy arose, and the soldiers appeared carrying a number of hams, some loaves, and more welcome than all, several skins of wine, all discovered in a vault, the entrance to which was concealed by the straw the old woman was lying on. The young peasant darted on them a look of infernal vengeance, while the lieutenant, who had pondered with anxiety on the destitute and sinking condition of his troops, rejoiced for a moment in the unexpected supply. But the recent poisoning of several cisterns, and other fearful examples, putting him on his guard, he again interrogated the woman.

"Whence come these provisions?"

"They are all the same as those we burnt; we concealed them for our friends."

"Is your husband with yonder brigands?"

"My husband is in heaven!" said she, lifting up her eyes; "he died for the good cause,—that of God and King Ferdinand!"

"Have you any brother amongst them?"

"I have no longer a tie—except my poor child"—and she pressed the infant to her heart:—the poor little creature was thin and sallow, but its large black eyes glistened as they turned to its mother.

"Commander," exclaimed one of the soldiers, "pray order divisions of the booty, for we are very hungry, and devilish thirsty."

"One moment, my children; listen," said he, eyeing the young woman with suspicious inquisition; "these provisions are good I hope?"

"How should they be otherwise?" replied the Spaniard, contemptuously,—"they were not for you."

"Well! here's to thy health, then, demonia," said a young sub-lieutenant, opening one of the skins and preparing for a draught, but his more prudent commander still restrained him.

"One moment. Since this wine is good, you will not object to a glass."

"Oh, dear no! as much as you please." And, accepting the mess-glass offered by the lieutenant, she emptied it without hesitation.

"Huzza! Huzza!" shouted the soldiers, delighted at the prospect of intoxication without danger.

"And your child will drink some also," said the lieutenant; "he is so pale, that it will do him good."

The Spaniard had herself drank without hesitation, but in holding the cup to her infant's lips her hand trembled: the motion, however, was unperceived, and the child also emptied his glass. Thereupon the provisions speedily disappeared, and all partook both of food and wine. Suddenly, however, the infant was observed to turn livid—its features contracted—and its mouth, convulsed with agony, gave vent to piteous shrieks. The mother too, though her fortitude suppressed all complaint, could scarcely stand, and her distorted features betrayed her sufferings.

"Wretch!" exclaimed the commandant, "thou hast poisoned us!"

"Yes," said she with a ghastly smile, falling to the ground beside her child, already struggling with the death-rattle. "Yes; I have poisoned you. I knew you would fetch the skins from their hiding-place;—was it likely you would leave a dying creature undisturbed on her litter? Yes—yes—you will die, and die in perdition, while I shall go to heaven."

Her last words were scarcely audible, and the soldiers at first did not comprehend the full horror of their situation; but as the poison operated, the Spaniard's declaration was legibly translated in her convulsed features. No power could longer restrain them; in vain their commander interposed; they repulsed him, and dragging their expiring victim by the hair to the brink of the torrent, threw her into it, after lacerating her with more than a hundred sabre strokes. She uttered not a groan. As for the child, it was the first victim.

Twenty-two men were destroyed by this exploit—which I cannot call otherwise than great and heroic. The commander himself told me he escaped by miracle.

The persuasion that the bed of death would be disturbed in search of booty, was indeed holding us as savages; and such was the impression produced by the man who could command, "Let no sanctuary deter your search." By such means were the populace from the beginning exasperated against us, and especially by the oppressions of General D***** If the inhabitants of Argueno had not received information that they were to be massacred, they would not have taken the lead in massacre.

Such were the people amongst whom I dwelt. When this tale was related to me, on the eve of my departure from Burgos, I shuddered in contemplating on the murderous war of people against people! I trembled for the first time since my entrance into Spain. I was become timid. Alas! it was not on my own account—but I was again approaching the great crisis of maternity—and amidst what perils, good God! was my child destined to see the light.

CHARACTERS OF SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

BY WILLIAM HAZLITT.

NO. II.—CYMBELINE.

not allowed to play the parts of women, which made it necessary to keep them a good deal in the background. Does not this state of manners itself, which prevented them from exhibiting themselves in public, and confined them to the relations and charities of domestic life, afford a truer explanation of the matter? His women are certainly very unlike stage-heroines; the reverse of tragedy queens.

We have almost as great an affection for Imogen as we had for Posthumus; and she deserves it better. Of all Shakspeare's women she is perhaps the most tender and most artless. Her incredulity—the opening scene with Iachimo as to her husband's infidelity—is so much as Desdemona's backwardness to believe Othello's jealousy. Her answer to the most distressing part of the picture is only, "My lord, I fear, has forgot Britain." Her readiness to pardon Iachimo's false imputation, and his designs against herself, is a good lesson to prudes; and may show that where there is a real attachment to virtue, it has no need to bolster itself up with an outrageous or affected antipathy to vice. The scene in which Pisanio gives Imogen his master's letter, accusing her of incontinency, on the treacherous suggestions of Iachimo, is as touching as it is possible for anything to be:

"PISANIO. What cheer, madam?

"IMOGEN. False to his bed? What is it to be false, To lie in watch there, and to think on him? To weep 'twixt clock and clock? If sleep charge nature,

To break it with a fearful dream of him And cry myself awake? That's false to's bed, is it?

"PISANIO. Alas, good lady!

"IMOGEN. If false? Thy conscience witness, Iachimo, Thou didst accuse him of incontinency, Thou then look'dst like a villain; now methinks Thy favour's good enough. Some jay of Italy, Whose mother was her painting, hath betrayed him: Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion, And for I am richer than t'hang by the walls, I must be right: to pieces with me. Oh, Men's vows are women's traitors. All good seeming By thy revolt, oh husband! shall be thought Put on for villany: not born where't grows, But worn a bait for ladies.

"PISANIO. Good madam, hear me—

"IMOGEN. Talk thy tongue weary, speak: I have heard I am a strumpet, and mine ear, Therein false struck, can take no greater wound, Nor tent to bottom that."

When Pisanio, who had been charged to kill his mistress, puts her in a way to live, she says:—

"Why, good fellow, What shall I do the while? Where bide? How live?

Or in my life what comfort, when I am Dead to my husband?"

Yet when he advises her to disguise herself in boy's clothes, and suggests "a course pretty and full in view, by which she may happily be near the residence of Posthumus," she exclaims,

"Oh, for such means Though peril to my modesty, not death on't, I would adventure."

And when Pisanio, enlarging on the consequences, tells her she must change,

"Fear and niceness, The handmaids of all women, or more truly Woman its pretty self, into a waggish courage Ready in gibes, quick-answered, saucy, and As quarrelous as the weazel,"

She interrupts him hastily,—

"Nay, be brief; I see into thy end, and am almost A man already."

In her journey, thus disguised, to Milford Haven, she loses her guide and her way; and, unbosoming her complaints, says beautifully,—

"My dear lord, Thou art one of the false ones; now I think on thee, My hunger's gone, but even before, I was At point to sick for food."

She afterwards finds, as she thinks, the dead body of Posthumus and engages herself as a footboy to serve a Roman officer, when she has done due obsequies to him she calls her former master :—

" And when
With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha' strewed
his grave,
And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh,
And leaving so his service, follow you,
So please you entertain me."

" Now this is the very religion of love. She all along relies little on her personal charms, which she fears may have been eclipsed by "some painted jay of Italy;" she relies on her merit, and her merit is in the depth of her love, her truth, and her constancy. Her admiration of her beauty is exerted with as little consciousness as possible on her part. There are two delicious descriptions given of her, one when she is asleep, and one when she is supposed dead. Arviragus thus addresses her :—

" With fairest flowers,
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave ; thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor
The azur'd hare-bell, like thy veins, no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, which not to slander
Outswaeten'd not thy breath."

Iachimo gives another thus, when he steals into her bed-chamber :—

" Cytherea,
How bravely thou becom'st thy bed ! Fresh lily,
And whiter than the sheets. That I might touch—
But kiss, one kiss—'Tis her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus ; the flame o' the
taper
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids
To see the inclosed lights, now canopied
Under the windows, white and azure, laced
With blue of heaven's own tint—on her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drop
I' the bottom of a cowslip."

There is a moral sense in the proud beauty of this last image, a rich surfeit of the fancy,—as that well-known passage beginning, "Me of my lawful pleasure she [restrained, and prayed me oft forbearance," sets a keener edge upon it by the inimitable picture of modesty and self-denial.

The character of Cloten, the conceited booby lord and rejected lover of Imogen, though not very agreeable in itself, and at present obsolete, is drawn with great humour and knowledge of character. The description which Imogen gives of his unwelcome addresses to her—"Whose love-suit has been to me as fearful as a siege"—is enough to warn the most ridiculous lover of his folly. It is remarkable that though Cloten makes so poor a figure in love, he is described as assuming an air of consequence as the queen's son in a council of state, and, with all the absurdity in his person and manner, is not without shrewdness in his observations. So true is it that folly is as often owing to a want of proper sentiment as to a want of understanding. The exclamation of the ancient critic, "Oh, Menander and Nature, which of you copied from the other!" would not be misapplied to Shakespeare.

The other characters in this play are represented with great truth and accuracy; and, as it happens in most of the author's works, there is not only the utmost keeping in each separate character; but in the casting of the different parts, and their relation to one another, there is an affinity and harmony like what we may observe in the gradations of colour in a picture. The striking and powerful contrasts in which Shakespeare abounds could not escape observation: but the use he makes of the principle of analogy to reconcile the greatest diversities of character, and to maintain a continuity of feeling throughout, has not been sufficiently attended to. In "Cymbeline," for instance, the principal interest arises out of the unalterable fidelity of Imogen to her husband, under the most trying circumstances.

Now the other parts of the picture are filled up with subordinate examples of the same feeling, variously modified by different situations, and applied to the purposes of virtue and vice. The plot is aided by the amorous importunities of Cloten; by the tragical determination of Iachimo to conceal the defeat of his project by a daring imposture; the faithful attachment of Pisano to his mistress is an affecting accompaniment to the whole; the obstinate adherence to his purpose in Bellarius, who keeps the fate of the princess so long a secret, in resentment for the ungrateful return to his former services; the incorrigible wickedness of the queen, and even the blind uxorious confidence of Cymbeline, are all so many lines of the same story leading to the same point. The effect of this coincidence is rather felt than observed; and as the impression exists unconsciously in the mind of the reader, so it probably arose in the same manner in the mind of the author, not from design, but from the force of natural association, a particular train of feeling suggesting different inflections of the same predominant principle, melting into, and strengthening one another,—like chords in music.

The characters of Bellarius, Guiderien, and Arviragus, and the romantic scenes in which they appear, are a fine relief to the intrigues and artificial refinements of the court from which they are banished. Nothing can surpass the wildness and simplicity of the descriptions of the mountain life they lead. They follow the pursuits of huntsmen, not of shepherds; and this is in keeping with the spirit of adventure and uncertainty of the rest of the story, and with the scenes in which they are afterwards called on to act. How admirably the youthful fire and impatience to emerge from their obscurity in the young princes is opposed to the cooler calculations and prudent resignation of their more experienced counsellor! How well the disadvantages of knowledge and of ignorance, of solitude and society, are placed against each other!

" GUIDERIUS. Out of your proof you speak : we
poor unledged
Have never wing'd from view o' the nest ; nor
know not
What air's from home. Happily this life is best,
If quiet life is best ; sweeter to you
That have a sharper known ; well corresponding
With your stiff age : but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance, travelling a-bed,
A prison for a debtor, that not dares
To stride a limit.

ARVIRAGUS. What should we speak of
When we are old as you ? When we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December ! How
In this our pinching cave shall we discourse
The freezing hours away ? We have seen nothing;
We are beastly ; subtle as the fox for prey,
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat :
Our valour is to chase what flies ; our cage
We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,
And sing our bondage freely."

The answer of Bellarius to this expostulation is hardly satisfactory; for nothing can be an answer to hope, or the passion of the mind for unknown good, but experience. The Forest of Arden in "As You Like It" can alone compare with the mountain scenes in "Cymbeline"; yet how different the contemplative quiet of the one from the enterprising boldness and precarious subsistence of the other ! Shakespeare not only lets us into the minds of his characters, but gives a tone and colour to the scenes he describes from the feelings of their imaginary inhabitants. He, at the same time, presents the utmost propriety of action and passion, and gives all their local accompaniments. If he was equal to the greatest things she was not above attention to the smallest. Thus the gallant sportsmen in "Cymbeline" have to encounter the abrupt declivities of hill and vallies: Touchstone and Audrey jog along a level path. The deer in Cymbeline are only regarded as objects of prey. "The game's a tool," &c.; with Jacques, they are fine subjects to moralize upon at leisure, "under the shade of melancholy boughs."

We cannot take leave of this play, which is a favourite with us, without noticing some occasional touches of natural piety and morality. We may allude here to the opening of the scene in which Bellarius instructs the young Princes to pay their orisons to heaven :—

" See, boys, this gate
Instructs you how t' adore the heav'n's ; and bows
you
To morning's holy office.
GUIDERIUS. Hail, heaven !
AVIRAGUS. Hail, heaven !
BELLARIUS. Now for our mountain sport, up to
yon hill."

What a grace and unaffected spirit of piety breathes in this passage. In like manner, one of the brothers says to the other, when about to perform the funeral rites to Fidele :—

" Nay, Cadwell, we must lay his head to the East,
My father hath a reason for 't."

Shakspeare's morality is introduced in the same simple unobtrusive manner. Imogen will not let her companions stay away from the chase to attend her when sick, and gives her reason for it—

" Stick to your journal course; the breach] of
custom
Is breach of all."

When the queen attempts to disguise her motives for procuring the poison from Cornelius, by saying she means to try its effects on "creatures not worth hanging," his answer conveys at once a tacit reproof of her hypocrisy and a useful lesson of humanity—

" — Your highness
Shall from this practice but make hard your
heart."

EDUCATION OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES.

[Continuation of the Second Chapter of Mr Simpson's "Necessity of Popular Education as a National Object.]

CONTENTS :—FALSE MORALITY OF CLASSICS.

It is a natural result of the long reign of an institution which it is held a sort of treason to question, that it is ill prepared for its defence when it comes to be put upon it. The treatises professedly defensive of classical literature are few, because, like the popish faith, it has long claimed infallibility, and the need of apologies for it was as little dreamed of as arguments for popery at Rome. When we do meet with that superfluity, as hitherto deemed, a defence of Latin and Greek, or rather a catalogue of their merits which is not expected to be questioned, it is wonderful how feeble we find it. Scarcely an exception exists; even the talent of a Vicesimus Knox is nought here. The advocates of the dead languages uniformly avoid, or at least mistake, the true ground of the controversy. They expatiate on the absolute merits of classical literature, but never dream of comparing it with the education which it excludes. When the question, however, is set on this latter ground, it is capable of great abridgment; for, though we should grant much of absolute value to the actual attainment of classical accomplishment, the experience of centuries has demonstrated that it is of value to so few of those who are forced to pursue it, that the patient repetition of the error from generation to generation,—the unquestioned duty of each oblivious father to enter his son in the classical curriculum, as he was entered by his son's grandfather, in which he is to devote years to what is expected to be faithfully forgotten, *more majorum*, affords a striking proof of the force of an ignorant custom enthraling an imperfectly-educated people. Were the actual value, then, of classical study tenfold what it is, if it be true that ninety-nine in every hundred who engage in it fail, and for centuries have failed, of attaining to that degree of proficiency which is of any value at all, then classical study is not the proper education for ninety-nine in every hundred of those who at present lose their time in the pursuit of it; and, who, as there is no substitute, are left uneducated to all useful practical ends and

purposes. What is therefore wanted, is to abolish the exclusiveness of the dead languages; to allot them their proper place as subjects of study; to render them easily accessible to all who seek them, either as necessary to a learned profession, as a direct gratification of taste, or an elegant accomplishment; and, at the same time, to substitute, in early and general education, objects of study more practically useful, which, from their nature, will be better remembered, and will furnish the substantial power of knowledge and resource for life. All the real benefit society to from the classics will thus be preserved; it being obvious that no benefit accrues in any way whatever, either to the student or the community, from their stated oblivion. When we come to the proposed educational substitute, however, it is hoped it will be admitted that the condition of the non-classical world, will, after all, not be so desolate; and, that, though labouring in another field, or travellers by another road, they will present an aspect of society at least as enlightened, as powerful, and as accomplished, as any to be found within the walls of the most ancient classical foundations. Now all this is true, even on the assumption of greater advantages than can well be conceded to the dead languages; but it is still more worthy of consideration, if it be true that their value is greatly overrated.

What is arrogated for Latin and Greek may be comprised in a few particulars. They afford, it is said, the best possible discipline for the intellectual faculties,—they are, from their perfection, as tongues, the best known subjects of philological exercise;—for the same reason, they are the most perfect instruments of thought with which we are acquainted;—as radical languages, they are the sources of a most extensive and instructive etymology;—they are the depositories of much useful science and sublime philosophy, physical and moral;—they are, finally, *par excellence*, the native tongues of poetry, eloquence, wit, and taste. Generally, I would humbly argue that none of these claims are exclusive, even if granted to their fullest extent. The study of English alone, to say nothing of other modern languages, affords ample scope for intellectual discipline, to the limited extent that language can supply it; our own tongue is a copious and refined instrument of thought, and is capable of a most critical and logical analysis; the Celtic, Saxon, and Scandinavian, have stronger claims on the ground of etymology, yet are never appealed to as necessary to explain their derivatives; and no more need the Latin and Greek. We are richer than Greece and Rome in poetry, oratory, wit, and taste, because we have all theirs transferred, and all our own superadded; and, lastly, our science and philosophy reduce the pretensions of the Latins and Greeks, in this particular, to utter insignificance.

It is no reply to say that all these advantages were originally borrowed from the ancient tongues. This is granted, and gratefully acknowledged; still, if it was borrowed, it is incorporated; the loan is not merely enjoyed, but added to an immense superstructure of capital unknown to the lenders. Into English are transferred and incorporated correct logical grammar,—copious, refined, and exquisitely various expression,—store of taste, elegance, imagery, pathos, wit, and criticism,—and all the science worth transferring; while the ancient authors themselves are all translated to the complete and undeniable appropriation of everything but certain felicitous turns of expression, the only quality which translation cannot transfer; but, at its best, a luxury, too dearly purchased by exclusive study for one-fourth of a lifetime. It is undeniably, that, as records of ancient civilization, such as it was, and of the institutions, laws, philosophy, and literature of Greece and Rome, they are all transferred into our own language. An unfair use is made, in the controversy, of the fact, that the New Testament is written in Greek; and a sort of charge of impiety is insinuated against those who object to the universal study of the tongue on this account. Now, no one has gone so far as to propose to extinguish Greek as an entity, or to deny that theologians ought to be master of it. But if the Christian message is only to be understood in

Greek, why was it translated into English, and in that language alone read to and by the universal British people, with the perfect sanction of their spiritual guides, themselves masters of the original?

This discussion might be extended far beyond the space which can be allotted to it here. It may be observed, summarily, 1st, It is to mistake, as shall be made to appear in the sequel, the nature and operation of the faculties of the human mind, to talk of cultivating an instrument of thought *previous* to using it in actual thinking. The use of the tool is learned by applying it to the material, and cannot be learned without it; and, moreover, the material must be understood before the tool can be conceived. The faculties require knowledge first, and then expression in language; to reverse the order were a solecism; in a word, thought must precede language; the utmost analytical refinements of language are only so many means of expressing varieties of thought; the language did not create the thought, but the thought demanded the language; so that when a mere philologist is engaged in his analytical task, and is dealing with ideas as well as words, he deceives himself if he thinks that the most refined expressions, the most delicate shades of meaning suggested the ideas; much more if he imagines that they constitute the ideas themselves. How and where ideas are to be obtained by the right exercise of the faculties will afterwards be shown; and it is trusted that it will then appear that nature has ordained a better course for this than translating, analysing and parsing a page of Greek; may, that this last operation itself will be more intelligently and usefully performed by the student, who comes to it with the knowledge stores of an intellectual training more in accordance with nature.

2nd, It will likewise be shown in the sequel, that there are modes of disciplining the mind much more effectual than the most critical philology, which itself will be incalculably aided by that previous better discipline. As languages, Greek and Latin exercise but one faculty,—viz. verbal memory; their advocates who argue that they communicate a store of ideas, forget that these are as distinct from the languages themselves, “as is the swimmer from the flood,” and that there are better, because more natural, modes of obtaining them, modes much more entitled to the name of intellectual discipline.

3rd, The etymological argument is losing weight every day. The derivatives in English are made, and most successfully, direct subjects of study, and as easy of comprehension as their roots. As already said, we follow this course with all words of Celtic, Saxon, or Scandinavian origin; it is followed now, with regard to derivatives from Greek and Latin, by every school girl; till all the terms of art and science so derived, are becoming as familiar as such words as *tlescope*, *philosophy*, *anatomy*, *panorama*, &c. from the Greek, and *mensuration*, *rejection*, *emancipation*, *cavation*, &c. from the Latin.

4th, No one who knows them, denies the splendour,—imaginative, however, more than moral—of classical poetry and oratory, more than he disallows the claims of painting, music, sculpture, and architecture. It is, however, not too much to condition for the former, as we always do for the latter, that those only whose talents point in the direction of the objects so as to offer a chance of excellence, should devote themselves to them. But we have English poetry.

“We too can sing
With Lycidas, and build the lofty rhyme.”

We have exquisite poetry, besides, from female pens, whose authors never read a Greek or a Latin poet in the original.

5th, It is a matter of surprise to meet with the argument of *science* outside the walls of a very old classical foundation, within which the actual state of the scientific world is unknown. Latin and Greek contained science for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; but it is surely too much to send the

* Etymological Dictionaries are now in every girls' school. Dr Harrison Black has ably supplied this desiderate.

student of the nineteenth to the ancient authors for science. Everything true and useful in these is to be found, improved upon an hundred-fold, in thousands of English books; while the great proportion that is false and useless, is better forgotten. We can study Euclid's relations of extension, Diophantus's relations of number, and Archimedes's demonstration of specific gravity, of the properties of the lever, and of the relations of the sphere, cylinder, and cone,—found by Cicero sculptured on his monumental stone,—without requiring previously to learn Greek. No teacher of chemistry, mechanical philosophy, anatomy, physiology, or medicine, would dream of recommending to his pupils the ancient theorists on these induction-created sciences; if they did so, it would only be as a curious history of error, a subject for antiquarian research.

If for moral science, or ethics, we are told to go to Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Zeno, Epicurus, Cicero, and Seneca, the answer will naturally be—to which of all these? for the metaphysics, morals, and ethics of none of the Greek sages—Cicero and Seneca were scarcely original theorists—agree with those of another. I am well aware that the same difficulty occurs to perplex our choice among modern metaphysicians and moral philosophers,—at least down to the time of Professor Dugald Stewart, who joins in the confession of the Abbé Bonald, that philosophy is yet in expectation: but surely we need not take the trouble to learn Latin and Greek in quest of true philosophy not there to be found, merely that we may read, in the original, ingenious theories founded on false views of human nature, declamatory generalities about virtue and happiness, the practical worthlessness of which was exposed by their lack of practical effects in mitigating the selfishness, injustice, cruelty, and vice, of the people to whom they were taught, or rather before whom they were vainly displayed.

[To be continued.]

THE WEEK.

BIRTH-DAYS.

JANUARY 15, 1622. At Paris, Jean Baptiste Poquelin de Moliere, the greatest of comic dramatists; equally famous for the breadth of his humour, and the force of its foundation in truth. He was the son of an upholsterer. Like all the very greatest geniuses, he was a good-hearted man. It was he that gave a piece of gold by mistake to a beggar; and, upon the man's returning it to him, exclaimed, with a good faith little common to satirists, “Oh virtue! in what a corner hast thou *niched* thyself!”

17, 1706. At Boston, in New England, where his father was a soap-boiler and tallow-chandler, Benjamin Franklin, one of the Founders of the American Republic, a philosopher of the most practical order, scientific and moral, but defective in the imaginative part of man's nature, and in the knowledge of its wants. He began life in Philadelphia with a half-penny in his pocket, a roll of bread in his hand, and no lodging; and was seen by his future wife, as she stood at a window, eating his roll, and looking about him. Such a beginning was glorious; but it is a pity he ended with cutting his son off with a shilling, for differing with him in politics.

Same day, 1749. At Asti, in Piedmont, of a noble family, Vittorio Alfieri, the most celebrated tragic dramatist of Italy,—a country remarkable for its deficiency in the drama solely. He had more will than power perhaps to be a great poet, and far too little sympathy for a dramatic one. He beats out his short and stern sentences, like bolts on an anvil. But we should speak of him with hesitation, having never been able to do more than look into his writings. Alfieri was singularly fond of horses; and used to allow himself an additional one, for every new tragedy that he wrote.

18, 1689. At the Chateau of Brede, near Bordeaux, Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu; a lively theoretical legislator, more profound than his wit lets him be taken for by some, and less so

than his constitutional vivacity and freedom from trouble would suffer his natural powers to render him. He was a very amiable man. Some foreign visitors waiting upon him in his old age, found a volume of Ovid's love poems lying open on his table; and he was so Hale and agile, that going to show them about his grounds, and coming to a gate which was locked and put them to a stand, he astonished them by laying his hand upon it, and jumping over.

19. 1478. At Thorn in Prussia, Nicholas Copernicus, the restorer of the Pythagorean and existing theory of the universe, which makes the sun the centre of the planetary system. He was son of a merchant, and was in the church. A fear of offending the religious mistakes of his time kept his great work a long time from the press. At length he permitted it to appear, and received a copy of it a few hours before he died.

— 1736. At Greenock in Scotland, James Watt, the advance of the steam-engine to its present important usefulness. He was son of a tradesman, and was bred a mathematical instrument maker.

THE WEATHER, AND THE MOVEMENTS OF NATURE.

Very cold weather takes place this time of year; when it happens otherwise, it generally either rains or blows a gale.

Larks now congregate, and fly to the warm stubble for shelter; and the nut-hatch is heard. The slug makes its appearance, and commences its depredations on garden-plants and green wheat. The thrush, missel-thrush, and hedge-sparrow, begin to sing. The wren also pipes her perennial lay, even among the flakes of snow. The titmouse pulls straw out of the thatch, in search of insects. Linnets congregate, and rooks resort to nest trees; pullets begin to lay; young lambs are dropped.

The house-sparrow chirps; the bat appears; spiders shoot out their webs; and the blackbird whistles. The field-fares, red-wings, skylarks, and titlarks, resort to watered meadows for food, and are in part supported by the gnats which are on the snow, near the water. Ivy berries and the tops of tender turnips afford nourishment to the graminivorous birds, as the ring-dove, &c. Earth-worms lie out on the ground, and the snail appears.—*Forster's Perennial Calendar.*

WINTER.

It was a winter, such as when birds do die
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
Stiffen'd in the translucent ice, which makes
Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes
A wrinkled clot as hard as brick; and when,
Among their children, comfortable men
Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold:
Alas! then for the homeless beggar old!

SHELLEY.
The sword of winter, keen and cold.

CHAUCER.

Poor naked wretches, whosoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness defend you
From seasons such as these? *O, I have ta'en*
Too little care of this!

[It is King Lear who is speaking.]

Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them
And show the heavens more just. *

[Enter Edgar, disguised as a madman.]
Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Humph! go to thy bed and warm thee.
Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters, and art thou come to this?

SHAKSPERE.

Scene in Petruchio's Country-house.

Grumio. Holla! hoa! Curtis!
Enter Curtis. Who is that *calls so coldly?*
Grumio. A piece of ice. If thou doubt it, thou mayst slide from my shoulder to my heel, with no greater run than my head and neck.

Taming of the Shrew.

Part of a Song in 'Love's Labour Lost.'

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To who!
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel* the pot.

* Cool.

SPECULATIONS ON MY GRANDFATHER;

BEING AN INTRODUCTION TO A GRAVER QUESTION.

In contemplating the life of an individual who existed in a past age, events are so scarce, and matters of moment so sparingly found over its course, that the reviewer can scarcely distinguish whether he has before him the events of a day—a morning sunny, and a stormy noon—or the records of a life of the full term of man's existence. He sees, at one and the same instant, the child sporting in the fields, crowning itself with flowers,—fishing in the brook, or forcing his way through brake and briar after some boyish treasure,—aye looking towards the heaven, but thinking upon earth; and the old man, withered and worn with life and trouble, who has survived equally the ambition of the man and the cravings of the child—with eyes bent on earth, but thoughts turned heavenward; and they are the same individual. No one stage of his life is of more importance than another, who has not signalized it by some effort for the advantage of his species.

This is only a passing observation, perhaps uncalled for,—for fate has denied me ancestors whose deeds might have furnished to their survivor the study of a morning. I presented my promissory note for a grandsire at the portals of a past generation, and there were no effects! Reader, I pray you note it! for upon this defalcation in my progenitorial annals are founded the very unlettered thoughts which follow.

Some worthy has observed, that he sighed neither for park nor estate, because at any time he could take his recreation in those of others, and fancy them his own, and, moreover, without any of the inconveniences of their being such in fact. Here the philosopher had a manifest advantage over the proprietor, for he could appropriate in this pleasant way every agreeable spot he should chance to encounter; but for the man who owns a park—there is but *one* park in the world—his own: he has felt the substance of his own broad lands, and his mind consequently refuses to be cajoled by empty fancies into the possession of even a paradise. The philosopher might gladly find the last forever better than the first; but, amidst his admiration, the landholder would always bestrike his foot against some “odious comparison,” lying, like a tripping-stone, upon his path.

As to the enthusiast no estate, so to me no grandfather descended; and, accordingly, we both have gone up and down the world, picking and choosing, wherever fancy led us. This is no unpleasant prerogative; but men do not stand the examination of their descendants. I have chosen eleven grandsires already—in their several turns they all have given way—I have now a twelfth upon trial.

I have, too, chosen an ancestor by his looks. Standing in a broker's wareroom, or old gallery, the portrait of some respectable-looking gentleman has arrested me as his; and a reverential emotion would steal over his possible descendant. Does he nod at me—or is't a “rat behind the arras?” At other times, the high-backed chair, the antique secrétaire, attracted my curiosity. Of the one I demanded if it had ever supported his beloved form? and of the other, whether it had been the depository of the secrets of him who was now a mystery to me? Who and what was he? A Creole or a Turk—a Nabob, or one of the Society of Friends—an Esquimaux or a Yorkshireman—which? Was he a broad-shouldered

“lover, from Erin's green isle,” or a “good old English gentleman?”—I am at liberty to choose, Was he a dapper merchant, dwelling behind stained panes in some city causeway, perched eternally at his desk, like his good lady's parrot in its golden cage—or was he a hedger and ditcher, or at times a mower, “singing blythe” over conquered fields of hay—given to resting on his arms, and his uncareful thoughts occupied alone with the low state of his firkin?—which?

Ex filio disc patres. I have oft imagined him,—the placid, dignified old man! He is walking before me, say down Oxford road, towards the once rural village of St Giles; and he sighs to think how enormous and overgrown London is becoming. His hat is a hat—and not a warming pan in beaver: he evidently covers his head, as he would tile his house,—substantially. His coat, too, is that of a man of weight—with pockets (how unlike their gentle master) capable of any enormity; they are like panniers: he might carry his children to church in them. In his hand he wields, sedately planting it every step with firmness on the ground, an oaken branch of no mean weight. A leg, worthy of the whole frame, supports the well-built fabric; its foot decorated with a goodly buckle. A buckle! the eye follows that crowning glory of a shoe with respect, as it irradiates his firm and steady and modest steps over the path. He might have handed down those shoe-buckles to posterity; he would have done me a kindness by the trifles. They should have been treasured up as a *memento mori*, and, hanging over my boot-rack, acted as a tie upon me,—Lockes upon my understanding,—illustrious persuaders to serious thoughts. Each day I might have buckled-to, afresh, with good resolutions, or set on foot some worthy deed. Over them I would have had a legend, and the legend should have run thus:

“There is nothing left of the man save his buckles.”

My grandmother's shoe is in my possession; and such a shoe! from the beauty of its form, it was evidently formed for the family foot; but there is a flauntiness and a gaud in the height of the heel—in its colour—in the sky-blue ribbons—and its silver embroidery in front,—such as I don't altogether approve. Like the Irishman, I tremble for my own identity. I think of the time when these braveries were as the colours hung out by a pretty leg above; and the shoe misses the solemn and controlling faculty of the buckle.

What were my grandsire's tastes and occupations? Was he a student and a reader? or did he pass through life, unknowing of half his powers of sensation and enjoyment?—as if he were the alpha and omega of human kind: as if none had lived before by whom he might profit, or none were to follow, to whom he owed—ay, undoubtedly, owed, some tribute of instruction. Did he never dig a well in the great desert of life—for future wayfarers? Was he a virtuoso, passing his days in his museum? If so, his collection has slid into other hands, and his heart, perhaps, is preserved, and still locked up in the cabinet,—valuable as when beating with life.—His skull perchance grins cheek by jowl with that of a tattooed Indian or “stuffed alligator.”—Was he a statesman, seeking the philosopher's stone of modern times, *public approbation?* and did he win it? Was he a musician, his full-swelling march of existence dying away into an echo? Young, did his heart beat with (as he thought) the ambition of a Buonaparte, and did he live to find others, less capable, and no less grasping? Did he ever dream he read his fate in the eyes of a woman, and think his youth eternal, and her charms imperishable, and to be for ever in their spring, like the gardens of the south? Did he ever cease to love something or somebody? I hope not. And finally, did he live to find, notwithstanding the nullity of all his findings, that youth affords time enough for the man to lay up a store of virtue and sweet recollections—as comforting to old age as mother's milk is to the infant?

If my turn should ever come, like the heroes of

antiquity, by the yawning mouth of black Acheron,
to seek this mysterious ancestor in the Elysian fields—

Locos latos et amena vireta.

Glad spots, and balmy places green—

I have a few more questions, one in particular, wherewith to pose him; but this it may be as well to put to others, who are alive and can turn it to account; and, by the Editor's leave, I accordingly propose to do so in the next number of the *London JOURNAL*. It may be thought less wise than cunning to excite the reader's curiosity by this announcement; but whatever may be the style in which I may put it, the question, when it makes its appearance, will be acknowledged by all to be of the greatest moment; and if I cannot talk well for it myself, I shall leave it to talk for me. T.R.

“ We have seen the question put by our Correspondent, and do hereby state that it is one extremely to the purpose, and worth everybody's attention, and that he argues it very well too.—Eo. .

FINE ARTS.

Birmingham and its Vicinity, as a Manufacturing and Commercial District. By W. Hawkes Smith. No. II. Radclyffes and Co. Charles Tilt.

A PRETTILY got up account of Birmingham, with many illustrative engravings on steel, of public buildings, and manufactoryes, and large shops, very neatly executed by the local publishers, forming a sort of novel and attractive advertisement, less objectionable than many now in use. Among them are a very good view of the Bank—an exceedingly handsome building, a view of New Street, and the handsome portico of the Society of Arts. A view of Walsal fronts the number—and an excellent view it is too. Good illustrations are a very necessary part of a topographical work; but on account of the low price at which such works are necessarily sold, and the very inferior way in which wholesale engravers usually execute their work, they are very rare. Birmingham and its vicinity, however, is a work of love; it is published and illustrated by the proprietors; and forms in itself a very creditable testimony of their spirit, as denizens of the place and as tradesmen, and a very proper and sufficient advertisement of their own abilities.

MUSIC.

Songs of the Month; a Musical Garland. Novello, Fox.

THESE songs appeared originally in the ‘Monthly Repository,’ illustrating each month as it passed: they are now bound up in an octavo volume, equally slender and elegant. There is a pretty passage here and there, but they are overlaid with painful efforts to be original, and an affectation of abstruseness in the harmonies more surprising than pleasing. The authoress would seem to consult her grammar rather than her piano-forte; she has been infected by the mania for seeing her paper adorned with plenty of those fascinating characters that typify the sharps and flats, the privilege of using which is so envied by tyro composers, and does not enough consider how the ear may suffer for her caprices. It is as attractive and engrossing a propensity as that for using hard words, and as little to be depended upon as a test of real learning. Swift's test of a good style in language might be adapted to music—proper notes in proper places. Rule and rationality are no fetters to original genius. Sir Joshua Reynolds has aptly likened them to armour—a defence and aid to the strong, an oppression only to the weak. The fair composer, however, has evidently so competent a knowledge of the art in general, and it is so rare and pleasant a thing to see a lady favouring the public in this way, that we hope another time she will do justice to the better part of her musical faculties, and consult the grace and feeling that she really possesses, instead of the wish to be admired for them.

THE LATE MR IRVING.

[From ‘Fraser’s Magazine.’ It may be as well to add, considering the prevailing tone of this magazine, that the article from which the following passage is taken, is written in sober earnest—we need not add, how well.]

“ This man was appointed a Christian Priest: and strove with the whole force that was in him so *be it*. To be it: in a time of Tithe Controversy, Encyclopedism, Catholic Rent, Philanthropism, and the Revolution of Three Days! He might have been so many things; not a speaker only, but a doer; the leader of hosts of men. For his head (when the Fog-Babylon had not yet obscured it), was of strong far-searching insight; his very enthusiasm was sanguine, not atrabilian; he was so loving, full of hope, so simple-hearted, and made all that approached him his. A giant force of activity was in the man; speculation was accident, not nature. Chivalry, adventurous field-life of the old Border (and a far nobler sort) ran in his blood. There was in him a courage dauntless, not pugnacious; hardly fierce, by no possibility ferocious: as of the generous war-horse, gentle in its strength, yet that laughs at the shaking of the spear.—But, above all, be what he might, to be a *reality* was indispensable for him. In his simple Scottish circle, the highest form of mankind attainable or known was that of Christian; the highest Christian was the Teacher of such. Irving’s lot was cast. For the foray-spears were all rusted into earth there; Annan Castle had become a Town-hall; and Prophetic Knox had sent tidings thither: Prophetic Knox—and, alas, Sceptic Hume,—and (as the natural consequence), Diplomatic Dundas. In such mixed incongruous element had the young soul to grow.

“ Grow nevertheless he did (with that strong vitality of his); grow and ripen. What the Scottish uncelebrated Irving was they that have only seen the London celebrated (and distorted) one can never know. Bodily and spiritually, perhaps there was not (in that November, 1822) a man more full of genial energetic life in all these Islands.

“ By a fatal chance, Fashion cast her eye on him, as on some impersonation of Novel-Cameronianism, some wild product of Nature from the wild mountains; Fashion crowded round him, with her meteor lights, and Bacchic dances; breathed her foul incense on him; intoxicating, poisoning. One may say, it was his own nobleness that forwarded such ruin: the excess of his sociability and sympathy, of his value for the suffrages and sympathies of men. Syren songs, as of a new Moral Reformation (sons of Mammon, and high sons of Belial and Beelzebub, to become sons of God, and the gumflowers of Almack’s to be made living roses in a new Eden), sound in the inexperienced ear and heart. Most seductive, most delusive! Fashion went her idle way, to gaze on Egyptian Crocodiles, Iroquois Hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man—who unhappily could not in his turn forget. The intoxicating poison had been swallowed; no force of natural health could cast it out. Unconsciously, for most part in deep unconsciousness, there was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed Singularity. O foulest Circean draught, thou poison of Popular Applause! madness is in thee, and death; thy end is Bedlam and the Grave. For the last seven years, Irving, forsaken by the world, strove either to recall it, or to forsake it; shut himself up in a lesser world of ideas and persons, and lived isolated there. Neither in this was there health: for this man such isolation was not fit; such ideas, such persons.

“ One who knew him well, and may with good cause love him, has said: ‘ But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with: I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever (after trial enough) found in this world, or now hope to find.’ ”

FIRST THOUGHTS AND SECOND THOUGHTS.

First thoughts are good, and second thoughts are good;

Those most enrich us, these do best advise.

First thoughts are like first love, and us surprise

With sudden bliss—till second thoughts intrude,

Fraught with wise doubts of much to be eschewed,

Not fit;—where yet the greater danger lies,

Lest while we doubt, the vision from our eyes

Offended pass—thereafter vainly woed.

First thoughts are mistresses with heat pursued,

And mad devotion;—second thoughts are wives

Oft wed in over-prudence, and a mood

Most passionless.—He wiseliest contrives

Who adds the judgment while the love survives;

For so shall second thoughts, first thoughts include.

E. H.

The late Mr Charles Lamb.—We have this week the melancholy office of recording the death of Mr Charles Lamb, the author of ‘John Woodvil,’ of the ‘Essays of Elia,’ and of other works both in verse and prose, the most intirely delightful which the age has produced. It is the saddest duty of the kind we have ever been called on to perform; and it is with difficulty we can force on ourselves the persuasion that the event which compels us to it is real. Mr Lamb’s genius, pure and delicate [as it was, so intimately associated itself with household thoughts, so closely intermingled with the customary enjoyments of daily life, making what was already dear, yet dearer, touching the secret springs of social pleasure with a quickening art, and bringing out so delightfully the latent affinities of familiar things, that our obstinate regard insists on the impossibility of its being taken from us. But it is so! Mr Lamb died on Saturday, the 27th of December, at Edmonton, in the sixty-first year of his age, after an illness of a few days, during which we have the consolation to believe that he suffered but little, and to know that his almost unparalleled sweetness of disposition never, for an instant, failed. When time shall have enabled us to contemplate more steadily than we can do at present, the works which he has left behind him, we shall endeavour to express our own sense of the faculties which produced them—as exquisite in degree, and as remarkable in kind, as those which have appertained to any of the great poets of his time, the greatest of whom were among the warmest admirers and his fastest friends.—*Examiner.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THANKS TO F. G.

The ‘Reflector’ has long been out of print, and, we believe, can only be met with accidentally.

We are not aware of any version of the tragedy of ‘Egmont,’ but will inquire, and speak further if we find one.

Our fair friend, ONE OF THE MISS SMITHS, has doubly gratified us by her letter; but we fear that her opinions would by no means be so accordant respecting one picture as the other. *

The Editor has just received (Jan. 6) a letter from Paris, in reference to some translations from the writings of M. de B. He will duly consider the wishes expressed in that letter; and he mentions the receipt of it here, in case any unavoidable delay in answering it privately, might lead the fair writer to suppose that it had not come to hand.

If MONTICOLA will favour us with a specimen of the sort of questions and answers which he proposes to institute in our JOURNAL between cultivators of the Fine Arts, we will see what we can do for his project.

We are unable to answer the question of AMICUS and another Correspondent, respecting, the Supplements, till next week.

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